

REMARKS

Claims 1 – 8, 11 – 20, 22, and 35 – 43, 45 are now pending in the application. The Amendment does not introduce new matter, and the entry is respectfully requested. Based on the above Amendment and the following Remarks, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all outstanding objections and rejections, and that he withdraw them.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1 – 8, 11 – 20, 22, and 35 – 43, 45 have been rejected under the obviousness provisions of 35 U.S.C. § 103. The Examiner has rejected Claim 17 in general under the obviousness provisions of 35 U.S.C. § 103 as allegedly being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,787,234 to Molloy in view of U.S. PAP No. 2002/0007237 to Phung. This rejection as applied to amended Claim 1 is respectfully traversed.

The Examiner has stated that Molloy discloses “identifying inconsistent answers provided by the user to the two or more questions”, as recited in Claim 1 of the present invention. The Examiner references the following two passages from Molloy:

Either way, the user first retrieves ostensibly useful past cases and then applies some logical reasoning technique to derive valuable inferences from this finite set. Key assumptions in the case-based reasoning approach are that users will describe analogous situations in consistent ways, adhering to a reasonably uniform nomenclature, and that the implementation is such that the system will continue to search rapidly enough to be practical as the case base grows in size. [Col. 2 Lines 7 – 15]

The Examiner indicates that the above passage discloses modifying “the consistent approach of “case based” method and adapt the system for purposes of identify[ing] inconsistency based on the users answer to multiple questions. However, this passage makes no such reference to identifying inconsistencies to users answers. If anything, this passage suggest that the system relies on the assumption that “users will describe analogous situations in consistent ways, . . .” This passage may be referring to the creation of the case bases, but certainly does not teach or suggest “identifying inconsistent answers provided by the user to the two or more questions”, as recited in Claim 1.

The adaptive learning system is initialized by loading into the system cases which typically were derived from previous experience. For example, if the system application is as a help desk that is used in maintaining a computer network, each of the cases that is initially input into the system might identify a user, the equipment he is using, a problem previously encountered with the equipment, a diagnosis of the cause of the problem and a recommended action that was taken to solve the problem. The cases are stored by the processor in the case table in long-term memory. Each of the concepts identified in the cases is stored in the concept table in the long-term memory. As is detailed below, the case and concept tables are stored in compact form so as to minimize storage requirements and expedite searching of these tables.

From these cases the processor can then generate in real time ordered lists of concepts which are most closely associated with free text or with one or more concepts that are provided as inputs to the system. For example, if the system is queried about a specific problem experienced by a specific user with specific equipment, it can generate a list of possible diagnoses and corrective actions of this problem with the diagnoses and corrective actions ordered in the sequence of most likely diagnosis or correction on the basis of a past experience. Moreover, the system accumulates the information received about each new problem, which constitutes a new case, by constantly updating its case table in the long-term memory. As a result, each time the lists in short-term memory are regenerated, they too have been updated so that the order of diagnoses and corrective actions on the list will change with accumulated experience.

The system provides a type of processing that is conceptually close to that of a neural network, but overcomes the drawbacks of conventional neural nets, i.e., their need for continual retraining and their inability to scale up to large size, which arise because the neural net program and data are too large to reside in RAM. The system is more compact in part because the system does not require permanent storage of values for connection weights between concepts, as does a neural network. Rather, the system of the present invention simply stores the raw data in the form of concepts and cases in the long-term memory and computes in real time the scores needed to order the concepts for presentation to the user in the form of appropriate lists. [Col. 4, Lines 15 – 57]

The above passage does not teach or suggests “identifying inconsistent answers provided by the user to the two or more questions”, as recited in Claim 1. Accordingly, Claim 1, is believed to be allowable. By analogy, Claims 22 and 45 are believed to be allowable. In

addition, the claims depending from Claims 1, 22, and 45 are also believed to be allowable since they depend from an allowable claim.

The Examiner has rejected Claim 17 in general under the obviousness provisions of 35 U.S.C. § 103 as allegedly being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,787,234 to Molloy in view of U.S. PAP No. 2002/0007237 to Phung. The Examiner has stated that Molloy discloses "displaying an action detail window containing detailed information regarding a selected action from one of the first and second sets of recommended actions", as recited in Claim 17 of the present invention. In particular, the Examiner states that Molloy discloses this claim limitation in the following passage:

In FIG. 5, the consultant has selected the Problem concept "Poor Print Quality," as a result of a consultation with the user reporting the problem. Typically, during that consultation, the consultant will use the text at the bottom of the screen as a guide. This is hypertext which is associated with the concept Poor Print Quality. Having selected a Problem, the analyst now attempts to find a diagnosis by consulting the system memory via the Diagnosis field 50. The consultant does not enter text, but simply clicks, using the mouse or other pointing device, on the down arrow 65 to the right of the Diagnosis field. This action brings up a new picklist with a complex set of concept activations. The top two concepts are case (or cycle) activations. They are activated because in the system memory there are instances in which Poor Print Quality in Epson printers has been diagnosed as "Worn Ribbon" or "Draft Mode Selected." Case (or cycle) activations are shown as dark bars 60. Additional concepts are activated somewhat less strongly. These are concept activations, shown as slightly lighter bars 61. Each of these concepts is associated in the system memory either with Epson printers or with poor print quality, but in no instance with both. Thus, while "Empty Toner Cartridge" has a fairly strong association with poor print quality, it is not connected with Epson printers, which use inked ribbons instead of toner. One other concept 62 is activated by a text or synonym match, shown by the lighter-colored bar. [Col. 8 Line 52 – Col. 9 Line 11]

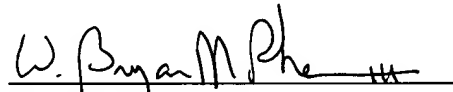
However, the above passage does not teach or suggest discloses "displaying an action detail window containing detailed information regarding a selected action from one of the first and second sets of recommended actions", as recited in Claim 17. In addition, Fig. 3 – 6 do not illustrate "displaying an action detail window containing detailed information regarding a selected action from one of the first and second sets of recommended actions", as recited in Claim 17. Therefore, Claim 17, and the associated dependent claims are believed

to be allowable. By analogy, amended Claim 40 and the associated dependent claims are also believed to be allowable.

Conclusion

All of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding objections and rejections, and that they withdraw them. The Examiner is courteously invited to telephone the undersigned representative if they believe that an interview might be useful for any reason.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "W. Bryan McPherson", is written over a horizontal line.

W. Bryan McPherson
Registration No. 41,988
Caterpillar Inc.

Telephone: (309) 675-4015
Facsimile: (309) 675-1236